

### INDIANA DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT Coordination and Communication Plan for Emergency Responses

#### **Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) Emergency Response**

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management strives to:

- \$ respond effectively and efficiently to environmental emergencies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year;
- \$ ensure the environment and human health are protected to the utmost of our ability;
- \$ ensure environmental emergencies are adequately addressed, including effective coordination and communication with numerous entities; and,
- \$ as applicable, ensure a thorough response is completed and that cleanup of any contamination occurs such that the public health and the environment are protected.

IDEM's Office of Land Quality Emergency Response Section has primary responsibility for responding to environmental emergencies. The overarching responsibility in every response is to protect human health. To help ensure protection of human health and the environment, Emergency Response communicates with and involves other entities (both internal and external to IDEM) as appropriate and communicates as needed with the public. The IDEM Emergency Response Coordination and Communication Plan documents the procedures that IDEM follows in responding to environmental emergencies. The Plan will be reviewed at least on an annual basis, with necessary changes, updates, and revisions made accordingly.

Last Revised - August 17, 2000

## The Coordination and Communication Plan for Emergency Responses

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## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE GENERAL PROCEDURES**

The following outlines how Emergency Response receives notification of an incident and how the Emergency Response Section determines their necessary level of involvement in an incident.

### **Spill Line**

Calls are received via the IDEM 24-hour spill line, 888/233-7745 or 317/233-7745

- \$ During normal work hours the call is answered by an Emergency Response dispatcher and then routed to an Emergency Responder.
- \$ After hours the IDEM spill line is answered by the State Emergency Management Agency Emergency Operations Center dispatcher. The dispatcher forwards all calls to IDEM Emergency Response staff on call after hours. Three persons are always on call to respond to Emergency Responses, as well as a chemist to assist with response needs. Roles include:
  - \$ **Primary Responder** - Receives calls from the after hours State Emergency Management Agency dispatcher, speaks with the person reporting the emergency, and makes a recommendation to the Tertiary Manager on whether a field response is necessary.
  - \$ **Secondary Responder** - Serves as backup to the Primary Responder. If the Primary Responder makes a field response, the Secondary Responder assumes primary response duties for receiving calls and conducting field responses.
  - \$ **Tertiary Responder** - An Emergency Response manager serves as the Tertiary Responder and is responsible for approving after hours field responses, approving the expenditure of state funds, and is in charge of communicating with senior management and media relations.
  - \$ **Chemist** - An Office of Land Quality Chemist is on call twenty-four hours to assist with chemical related questions including sampling issues and contaminants.

### **Prioritization of Spills for Field Responses**

In determining what type of response is needed, incidents are prioritized into different levels. Outlined below are some of the primary considerations utilized by the Emergency Response Section to prioritize an incident:

- \$ **Priority 1** - Involves damage to waters of the State, public water supply(ies), public health injuries, an ongoing fish kill, an air release causing an evacuation and/or assistance requested by another state entity or a local agency. Emergency Response responds to Priority 1 incidents. As circumstances evolve, a Priority 2 incident may be upgraded to a Priority 1 incident (and vice versa).
- \$ **Priority 2** - Involves threat to waters of the State, threat to public health, or the release of a large quantity of material. In addition, a Priority 2 incident may involve a reportable release (to IDEM) that a local entity or responsible party is responding to adequately. An immediate IDEM field response is not necessary, however Emergency Response may schedule a later field inspection or refer the call to another IDEM program, State entity, and/or local entity.

### **Prioritization of Spills for Field Responses - continued**

- \$ Priority 3** - Involves a non-reportable spill, a continuous release report, historical contamination, or complaint for another program area (i.e., non-priority I leaking underground storage tank or open burning). As appropriate, Emergency Response notifies another IDEM program, State entity, and/or local entity for their possible follow up.
- \$ Priority 4** - Involves non-substantiated complaints and miscellaneous calls. Emergency Response does not conduct a field response but, as appropriate, notifies another IDEM program, State entity, and/or local entity for their possible follow up.

### **COORDINATION PLAN for EMERGENCY RESPONSES**

Coordination with numerous entities is paramount to effective emergency responses. There are numerous aspects to effective coordination, including: coordination within IDEM; coordination with other state agencies; and coordination with federal agencies.

#### **Coordination Within IDEM**

Within IDEM different types of coordination are necessary, depending on the nature of an incident. This section outlines the different types of coordination within IDEM; with whom the coordination occurs; and the coordination procedures.

#### **Types of Coordination within IDEM**

In some circumstances the Emergency Response Section requests assistance or refers an incident to another section within the Office of Land Quality (OLQ) or another office within IDEM.

Three primary types of coordination occur between Emergency Response and other programs within IDEM: a referral for an immediate response; a request for a coordinated emergency response (i.e., Emergency Response and another Section(s) coordinate together on a response); or a referral for follow up to an incident for which the emergency has been addressed but further compliance, remediation, and/or enforcement is needed:

- 1) Referral for an immediate response - Emergency Response may receive notification of an incident for which it may be appropriate, if staff are available, for another program to take the lead in responding. Any staff member who takes the lead in responding to an emergency response will be trained in, and responsible for adhering to, the communication and coordination procedures. For example, in instances of an agricultural spill involving a confined feeding operation, Emergency Response will first notify the Agricultural and Solid Waste Compliance Inspector to determine if he/she can respond readily to the release. If the inspector is able to do so, Emergency Response may refer the response to the inspector and, unless additional assistance is needed by an Emergency Responder, the inspector takes the lead in responding, managing the incident, and following the procedures set forth in this plan.
- 2) Request for a coordinated emergency response - Emergency Response may be responding to an incident in which it is appropriate to have other IDEM program staff assist. An example of a coordinated emergency response involves failing or failed wastewater treatment plants in which Emergency Response, Wastewater Inspection, and Operator Assistance and Technical Support staff work together simultaneously to address the various issues.

## **Coordination Within IDEM - continued**

### Types of Coordination within IDEM - continued

- 3) Referral for follow up - Emergency Response takes some sort of initial action (varying from simply a database check to a field response lasting a number of days) then hands off the project to another program. Emergency Response's role is to ensure the emergency no longer exists and that a thorough spill response is completed with the goal being returning the impacted area to pre-spill condition. However, longer term compliance, remediation, and/or enforcement issues may continue to exist at a site which requires the oversight of another program.

### Coordination with Different IDEM Offices

In handling all three types of coordination, Emergency Response regularly partners with a number of programs within IDEM, including:

#### Office of Land Quality Programs

- \$ State Cleanup
- \$ Agricultural and Solid Waste Compliance
- \$ Industrial Waste Compliance
- \$ Natural Resource Damage Assessment
- \$ Leaking Underground Storage Tanks
- \$ Immediate Removals
- \$ Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know (SARA Title 3)

#### Office of Water Management

- \$ Wastewater Inspections
- \$ Operator Assistance and Technical Support
- \$ Drinking Water
- \$ Water Surveys
- \$ Biological Studies

#### Office of Air Management

- \$ Asbestos and Lead
- \$ Air Compliance
- \$ Air Monitoring

#### Office of Enforcement

- \$ Water Enforcement
- \$ Solid Waste Enforcement
- \$ Rapid Enforcement Response Coordinator

#### IDEM Regional Offices

- \$ Northwest Regional Office
- \$ Northern Regional Office
- \$ Southwest Regional Office

#### Office of Pollution Prevention and Technical Assistance

## **Coordination Within IDEM - continued**

### **Coordination Procedures**

The following procedures occur when any referral is made by the Emergency Response Section:

- \$ The manager in charge notifies the other program manager of the need for an immediate response by another program, a coordinated emergency response, or follow up oversight. In circumstances when the managers are not readily available, assistance may be requested at the staff level. In addition, with some programs, arrangements have been made which allow staff to request assistance without first going through the managers (i.e., State Cleanup and Agricultural and Solid Waste Compliance).
- \$ In a coordinated emergency response or a referral to another section for immediate response assistance, the impacted managers will determine the following:
  - 1) Who will serve as the manager in charge of the response.
  - 2) The proposed response plan, identifying which sections will do what work during the response and how information will be coordinated.
  - 3) Any additional resources that are needed (including other state agencies).
  - 4) If the referral is made for an ongoing priority I incident, an urgent email will be sent to the appropriate persons (outlined below) indicating the inclusion of other program(s) in the response and whether a new manager in charge has been designated.

### **Coordination with Local Agencies**

During an emergency response, IDEM coordinates with numerous local entities. Most frequently these local entities include: county health departments, county emergency management agencies, police departments, local utilities, and local fire departments. Local agencies are routinely contacted by Emergency Response to confirm the presence of a spill or release that has been reported in their jurisdiction. They are often able to assist with responses and/or provide the Emergency Responder information before he/she arrives at the site. In addition, in some circumstances, local agencies may be able to respond and provide further, specific information to IDEM, which in turn assists IDEM with determining if a State response is necessary.

In instances when an IDEM field response is necessary, the Emergency Responder attempts to contact the appropriate local agencies to discuss the following:

- \$ Nature of incident
- \$ Response activities (current and future)
- \$ Needed assistance
- \$ Role of the local agencies
- \$ Identified resources available

Furthermore, IDEM, the State Emergency Management Agency and the Indiana Emergency Response Commission all have roles in emergency planning. IDEM Emergency Responders frequently assist local agencies with emergency planning and participate in emergency exercises.

## **Coordination with Other State Agencies**

In addition to coordinating with programs within IDEM, Emergency Response regularly partners with a number of other state agencies. Outlined below are the key state agencies with whom Emergency Response regularly coordinates and the nature of the coordination:

### Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

The program area Emergency Response most frequently works with is IDNR Law Enforcement. IDNR Law Enforcement is notified of every report of a fish kill Emergency Response receives. Depending on a number of factors, including staff availability, magnitude of the reported release, and the suspected source(s) of contamination, IDEM and/or IDNR personnel will investigate. In addition, Emergency Response frequently notifies IDNR's Law Enforcement District Offices of releases to waters which do not result (or do not result initially) in a fish kill. Furthermore, IDEM and IDNR Law Enforcement have written cooperative response procedures for incidents involving fish kills. Emergency Response also has a Memorandum of Agreement with IDNR Division of Oil and Gas, outlining cooperative response procedures for incidents involving IDNR regulated oil and gas entities. Copies of these agreements and procedures are attached.

### Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH)

Emergency Response notifies ISDH of incidents involving releases of radiological wastes/materials, as they are the lead state agency for responding to such incidents. In addition, Emergency Response contacts ISDH regarding incidents that involve the following: potential human toxicological issues; actual or potential threats to public health; mercury; medical waste; and bioterrorism. In incidents in which public health may be endangered, Emergency Response coordinates with ISDH to provide information to the public on the status of any public health threat. Also, the ISDH laboratory routinely conducts analyses of IDEM Emergency Response water and soil samples.

### Transportation Incidents

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Toll Road Authority, and Indiana State Police are regularly involved in transportation accidents involving large quantities of fuel, hazardous materials, and objectionable substances. Depending on the specifics of the incident, IDEM and/or one or more of the other state agencies may respond.

### State Fire Marshall's Office (SFMO)

Large fires involving hazardous materials and tire fires often require a joint response by each agency. The SFMO lends technical support to the local firefighting unit(s) while Emergency Response addresses fire suppression water run-off and other environmental impacts. In addition, SFMO has air monitoring capabilities that may assist IDEM. Furthermore, Emergency Response has established written procedures (copy attached) from the SFMO, to ensure proper notification is provided to the SFMO in specific incidents.

## **Coordination with Other State Agencies - continued**

### **State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA)**

In particularly large incidents or disasters, which impact numerous persons and/or involve evacuations, Emergency Response frequently works closely with SEMA. In addition, Emergency Response notifies SEMA any time they are notified of acts of terrorism. Notification of these types of incidents is provided by IDEM to the SEMA Emergency Operations Center, which is operational 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In turn, SEMA will often notify IDEM, via the spill line, of incidents they become aware of that involve environmental issues. When they have staff on-site during a response, SEMA can also provide on-site assistance with a State public information officer, coordinating the State's (often multi-agency) public relations. SEMA also assists with disaster relief issues and securing needed response resources.

### **Purdue University Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory**

IDEM is currently working with Purdue University's Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (ADDL) to develop coordination procedures for sampling and testing of animals which die as a possible result of a release. Once finalized, the procedures will be attached as part of this plan.

### **State Chemists' Office**

The State Chemists' Office is frequently contacted by Emergency Response in circumstances of fertilizer, pesticide, and anhydrous ammonia releases.

### **Other State Agencies**

The above listed State Agencies are those with whom IDEM most frequently coordinates during emergency response incidents. This list is not considered exhaustive, as IDEM coordinates with other state agencies when deemed necessary by the specifics of an incident. For example, if during a response an Emergency Responder observes dead animals not being disposed properly, the Responder may contact the Indiana Board of Animal Health.

## **Coordination with Federal Agencies**

Often in large and/or technically challenging incidents, Emergency Response will partner with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and/or the U.S. Coast Guard. Typically Emergency Response notifies the U.S. EPA and U.S. Coast Guard via 24 hour telephone numbers for their assistance. Because of the requirements for responsible parties to contact the National Response Center, who in turn notifies the U.S. EPA and the U.S. Coast Guard, Emergency Response receives all National Response Center notifications received from within Indiana, in Lake Michigan, and in the Ohio River. Federal and Indiana reporting requirements are nearly identical with the greatest difference being Indiana's requirement to report spills of "objectionable substances". In addition, often Indiana is notified by the National Response Center of spills which originate from another state, but impact Lake Michigan or the Ohio River.

### **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs)**

EPA OSCs are contacted for technical assistance both via the telephone and in joint field responses. OSCs have contractors capable of air and water monitoring that is often beyond the state agencies' capabilities. In addition, OSCs may use federal funds to clean up hazardous substances (CERCLA/Superfund) and petroleum which enters navigable waters.



## **Coordination with Federal Agencies - continued**

### **U.S. Coast Guard**

Traditionally the Coast Guard has been the lead response agency for incidents in Lake Michigan and on the Ohio River and Emergency Response (and U.S. EPA) often serves in an assistance role during such incidents.

### **Other Federal Agencies**

The above listed Federal Agencies are those with whom IDEM most frequently coordinates during emergency response incidents. This list is not considered exhaustive, as IDEM coordinates with other federal agencies when deemed necessary by the specifics of an incident. For example, if a release impacts fish and wildlife, coordination may occur not only with IDNR Fish and Wildlife, but also with U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Likewise, if an incident involves air or rail travel, the National Transportation Safety Board is often involved.

## **COMMUNICATION PLAN for EMERGENCY RESPONSES**

Ensuring coordination and communication during environmental emergency responses is vital to ensuring a successful response which protects, to the utmost of our ability, human health and the environment and involves effective communication with the public. Outlined below are the various facets and roles involved in the Emergency Response Communication Plan.

### **Emergency Responder's Responsibilities**

The references in this document to Emergency Responders mean staff members trained to respond to all types of environmental emergencies. The majority of these staff are members of the Emergency Response Section. In addition, there are currently three other members of the Compliance and Response Branch who are trained as Emergency Responders and function in this capacity. The only time staff other than those trained as Emergency Responders take a lead in an Emergency Response is with confined feeding spills, when an Agricultural and Solid Waste Inspector may respond (as outlined above).

The first level of communication and coordination of a response is primarily the responsibility of the Emergency Responder managing the incident. Upon determination that an incident is a Priority I incident (regardless if this determination is made upon initial notification of the incident or if a Priority 2 or 3 incident is upgraded and determined to be a Priority 1 incident), the Emergency Responder is responsible for ensuring an attempt is made to contact the following local agencies:

- \$ County Health Department (through County Sheriff Dispatch if necessary)
- \$ Emergency Management Agency (through County Sheriff Dispatch if necessary)
- \$ Local Governmental Environmental Agency (if any and applicable to the incident)
- \$ IDEM Regional Office Director and/or Deputy Director (during regular work hours)

In an incident in which multiple counties are impacted, the Emergency Responder managing the incident is responsible for ensuring local agencies in all impacted counties are notified.

### **Shared Responsibilities**

Based on the nature of the incident these additional entities are notified by, to the best of our ability, positive contact (i.e., telephone communication) by either the Emergency Responder managing the incident, another Emergency Responder, or an Emergency Response Manager (usually either the Emergency Response Section Chief or the Compliance and Response Branch Chief):

- \$ IDNR Law Enforcement District Offices
- \$ Known Down Stream Water Intakes
- \$ Local Emergency Planning Committee Chairperson
- \$ Local Fire Department
- \$ Indiana State Department of Health
- \$ Deputy State Fire Marshall (through SEMA dispatch if necessary)
- \$ State Emergency Management Agency
- \$ Indiana Department of Transportation District Offices

The Emergency Responder managing the incident and the Emergency Response Manager determine which additional entities need to be contacted and who is responsible for making the contact.

### **Emergency Response Manager's Responsibilities**

When deemed appropriate, an Emergency Response Manager will notify other state or federal entities, including:

- \$ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- \$ U.S. Coast Guard
- \$ Center for Disease Control, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- \$ U.S. Department of Interior
- \$ U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- \$ U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency
- \$ IDEM Regional Office Director and/or Deputy Director (after hours)

### **High Impact Priority I Incidents**

Some Priority I incidents are of a nature and/or duration to be considered High Impact. Priority I Incidents are deemed High Impact if they: involve a threat to public health which requires sustained protection; require the coordinated involvement of a significant number of persons from other local, state, and/or federal agencies; require extensive and immediate communication with the public; and/or involve expedited compliance and enforcement efforts. Examples of High Impact Priority I Incidents include incidents which:

- \$ result in significant threat to public health, injuries, or death;
- \$ result in significant death or injury to wildlife, domestic animals, or flora;
- \$ pose an imminent and substantial danger to humans or the environment;
- \$ involve a very large volume of materials;
- \$ include a significant fire, explosion, or evacuation;
- \$ effect a large area, in terms of distance and/or multiple counties;
- \$ significantly impact an environmentally sensitive area, such as a habitat for a state or federally listed threatened or endangered species or a serious contamination concern with a sole source aquifer; and/or
- \$ attract a significant amount of public interest.

## **Emergency Response Manager's Responsibilities**

### **High Impact Priority I Incidents** - continued

In High Impact Priority I Incidents it is vital that IDEM senior staff are quickly notified of the incident and engaged in assisting with the Agency's response. The following procedures are in place to ensure effective communication of High Impact Priority I Incidents:

- 1) When a High Impact Priority I incident is first reported, telephone or pager notification 24 hours a day will be made by an Emergency Response Manager to:

- \$ OLQ Compliance and Response Branch Chief
- \$ OLQ Assistant Commissioner and/or Deputy Assistant Commissioner
- \$ Media Relations Specialist
- \$ Affected Regional Office Director

The OLQ Assistant and/or Deputy Assistant Commissioner will make the determination on whether to contact any other senior staff members regarding an incident:

- \$ Upon notification of a High Impact Priority I Incident, the OLQ Assistant Commissioner and/or Deputy Assistant Commissioner will assess the situation and determine the need for immediate (i.e., pager or telephone) notification to the Environmental Results Deputy Commissioner. In addition, if it is projected IDEM will spend over \$25,000 to respond to the incident, the OLQ Assistant Commissioner will immediately notify the Office of Management, Budget, and Administration Deputy Commissioner.
- \$ The Environmental Results Deputy Commissioner and the OLQ Assistant Commissioner will discuss and determine the other Senior Staff members who need to be immediately engaged in the Agency's response to the incident. Other Senior Staff members may be immediately notified for the following reasons:
  - \$ Commence preparation of a Communication Strategy (detailed below)
  - \$ Assist with ascertaining additional resources, both within IDEM and external resources

- 2) Urgent email notifications will be sent by an Emergency Response Manager at the earliest opportunity to:

- \$ Commissioner
- \$ Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Results
- \$ Public Policy Assistant Commissioner
- \$ Commissioner's Chief of Staff
- \$ Commissioner's Administrative Assistant
- \$ Media and Communication Services Director
- \$ State Emergency Management Agency designee
- \$ Indiana Department of Natural Resources designee
- \$ Indiana State Department of Health designee
- \$ All managers who received notification via pager or telephone
- \$ Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustee
- \$ As applicable, the Assistant Commissioner with primary oversight of the impacted facility (i.e., Office of Water Management Assistant Commissioner for a wastewater treatment plant release; Office of Air Management Assistant Commissioner for a regulated source's air release which causes an evacuation)
- \$ Affected Regional Office Director
- \$ Affected Regional Office Deputy Director

## **Emergency Response Manager's Responsibilities - continued**

### High Impact Priority I Incidents - continued

For High Impact Priority I Incidents that occur after hours, the urgent email notification will be sent by 9:00am the next business day. Telephone and email follow-ups will occur as necessary.

### Priority I Incidents

For all other Priority I incidents an urgent email notification will be sent at the earliest opportunity from an Emergency Response Manager to:

- \$ OLQ Compliance and Response Branch Chief or the Emergency Response Section Chief (dependent upon which manager is overseeing the response)
- \$ OLQ Assistant Commissioner
- \$ OLQ Deputy Assistant Commissioner
- \$ Media Relations Specialist
- \$ Commissioner
- \$ Environmental Results Deputy Commissioner
- \$ Public Policy Assistant Commissioner
- \$ Commissioner's Chief of Staff
- \$ Commissioner's Administrative Assistant
- \$ State Emergency Management Agency designee
- \$ Indiana Department of Natural Resources designee
- \$ Indiana State Department of Health designee
- \$ As applicable, the Assistant Commissioner with primary oversight of the impacted facility
- \$ Affected Regional Office Director
- \$ Affected Regional Office Deputy Director

For Priority I incidents that occur after hours, the urgent email notification will be sent by 9:00am the next business day.

### Contents of Urgent Emails

Urgent emails are sent by an Emergency Response Manager for High Impact Priority I Incidents and all other Priority I Incidents. Urgent emails include the following information:

- 1) Incident Title - A short descriptive incident title. Titles may include the impacted place, source, material released, media affected. Examples: Oil Spill to Fall Creek near Pendleton; Rail Tanker Explosion in Avon Yards
- 2) Narrative Description - A few sentences describing what is known or suspected to have happened. Example: Semi-tractor trailer veered into I-74 median between two bridges. Came to rest straddling Big Walnut Creek. Lost 100 gallons of vehicle's fuel and hundreds of 5-10 gallon jars of mayonnaise.
- 3) Likely/Observed Environmental and Human Health Impacts - Explain the actual and potential environmental and human health impacts. Explain why the incident is a human health and/or environmental concern. Example: One lane in each direction of I-74 closed. Several downstream water users nearby. 10 miles of creek turning color/observed with oil.
- 4) What is IDEM Doing - List Staff names, titles, and their anticipated tasks. Example: Rob Truelove, Responder, is en route to assess threat to nearby creek and determine source.

## **Emergency Response Manager's Responsibilities - continued**

### Contents of Urgent Emails - continued

- 5) What Other Organizations are on the scene or en route - List and relate their expected roles and activities. This section should highlight additional needed coordination, especially by senior staff, with local, state, and/or federal agencies. Example: Marion County Health Department is en route to perform air monitoring.
- 6) List Other Agencies that have been Notified
- 7) List Anticipated Next Steps - Explain what, if anything, remains to be done by IDEM; whether a coordinated emergency response with another program within IDEM needs to occur; whether additional resources are needed with contractors and/or external agencies; whether the site will be referred to another program for non-emergency follow up; whether the incident will be referred to enforcement and/or if the incident is a rapid enforcement response candidate.
- 8) Emergency Response Manager - Provide the contact name and number for the lead manager overseeing the response.
- 9) Input on potential public impact and a recommendation on media involvement and communicating with the public - Outline public and media attention the incident is currently receiving and if an IDEM media specialist has been notified of the incident and/or is en route to assist. Provide input on the potential impact to the public and mechanisms to best communicate and coordinate with the public and media.

**\*\*NOTE:** The purpose of urgent emails is to provide the most current information to a large number of people. Urgent emails do not replace the established protocols (outlined above) for positive contact to other local, state, and federal agencies and IDEM Senior Staff.

## **Media Coordination and Communication**

### Emergency Response Media Representative

The Media and Communication Service team will have a person on call to work with the Office of Land Quality 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for environmental emergency responses. This person is assigned a pager and cellular telephone and the numbers are included on the IDEM Emergency Response Telephone Rooster.

The Emergency Responder or Emergency Response Manager contacts the Emergency Response (ER) Media Representative immediately for any High Impact Priority I incidents in Indiana or any High Impact Priority I incident or its equivalent situation in states surrounding Indiana which may impact Indiana residents. The ER Media Representative is also notified of Priority 2 incidents to which Emergency Response sends a responder and which generates local media interest.

The ER Media Representative must ensure his or her supervisors and the Governor's Press Office are made aware of any High Impact Priority I incidents. However, the ER Media Representative's first priority is safeguarding public health.

## **Media Coordination and Communication - continued**

### **Emergency Response Media Representatives Responsibilities**

Outlined below are the ER Media Representatives responsibilities during different types of incidents:

- 1) High Impact Priority I Incidents
  - a) When IDEM has a significant role on-site, the ER Media Representative will also respond on-site as soon as possible to act as a spokesperson and coordinate the flow of public information. As needed, the ER Media Representative will coordinate with other IDEM officials and responding state agencies' public information officers to ensure a coordinated State communication approach.
  - b) When IDEM does not have a significant role on-site, but there is media interest and/or pertinent public health/environmental information that needs to be conveyed through the media, the ER Media Representative will respond to the site as soon as possible to coordinate with other agencies and help provide (and in some cases, take the lead to provide) on-site information.
  - c) When the High Impact Priority I incident occurs in the area of an IDEM regional office, media issues will be referred to the Indianapolis Media and Communication Services (MACS) Office. When the ER Media Representative responds to the incident he/she will coordinate with the Indianapolis MACS Office. In some situations the IDEM regional office director or other regional staff may be asked to assist on-site with media issues.
  - d) When an ER Media Representative responds to an incident, the on-site Emergency Responder will attempt to defer all media inquiries until the spokesperson arrives. However, if there is an immediate health or safety issue, basic information will be provided to the media either by the Emergency Responder or an off-site IDEM spokesperson.
  - e) In all High Impact Priority I incidents, the Assistant Commissioner for Public Policy and Planning will be notified by the MACS Office and will work with the directors of Community Relations and Legislative Relations to inform local elected officials.
- 2) Other Priority I Incidents
  - a) When IDEM has a significant role on-site and there is media interest in the incident and/or pertinent public health/environmental information that needs to be conveyed through the media:
    - The ER Media Representative will arrive on-site as soon as possible to coordinate public information.
    - When the incident occurs within the jurisdiction of a regional office, the Indianapolis MACS Office may request the regional director respond on-site and assist with media issues until the ER Media Representative arrives on-site.

## **Media Coordination and Communication - continued**

### **Emergency Response Media Representative's Responsibilities - continued**

#### **2) Other Priority I Incidents - continued**

- b) When IDEM does not have a significant role on-site, but there is a media interest and/or pertinent public health/environmental information that needs to be conveyed through the media, the following will occur:
  - The ER Media Representative, in consultation with the Emergency Response Manager and the MACS Director, will respond on-site to coordinate with other agencies and help provide on-site information.
  - When the Priority I Incident is within the jurisdiction of a regional office, the Indianapolis MACS Office may request the regional director respond on-site and serve as the IDEM spokesperson. The length of the regional director's involvement and whether the ER Media Representative should respond will be governed by the amount of media interest and in consultation with the regional office director, the ER Media Representative, the ER Manager, and the MACS Director.
- c) When IDEM has a significant role on-site, but little on-site media interest is generated and/or there is not pertinent human health/environmental information that needs to be conveyed through the media, the following will occur:
  - The ER Media Representative will be kept updated on what is transpiring, so he/she can respond to media inquiries from the Indianapolis Office;
  - The Emergency Responder on-site will refer inquiries, when practicable, to the ER Media Representative; and
  - When the incident and IDEM's involvement lasts most of a day or into a second day, the ER Media Representative will consider, in consultation with the MACS Director and the ER Manager, issuing a news release about the incident and IDEM's role.

#### **3) Non-Priority I Incidents**

Media issues will be assessed on a case-by-case basis when IDEM sends a responder to a non-priority I incident. Most often, when IDEM expends state monies for a response, the ER Media Representative will look for an opportunity to tell the IDEM story to local media. With rare exceptions, the story should be told on-site with local media in attendance. When on-site media briefings are not possible, a news release from Indianapolis will be issued.

#### **4) Media Tools**

The ER Media Representative may utilize the following tools in any given instance:

- \$ fact sheets
- \$ news release
- \$ special web site
- \$ on-site office
- \$ news conferences
- \$ newsletters
- \$ daily briefings at a specific time

Agency Procedures for Communicating with the Public

1) Publicly Owned Treatment Plants

If IDEM receives notification from a publicly owned treatment works permittee pursuant to subsection (a) of Indiana Code 13-18-12-8, IDEM must, if it is determined there is or may be a threat to human health or animal life, immediately notify the news media serving the residents of the affected area. The ER Media Representative must also contact the chief public information officer of the appropriate county health department and the Indiana State Department of Health as well as any affected utility. (Note: This procedure satisfies IC 13-18-12-18(b)(3), which requires IDEM to notify affected news media not more than 48 hours after it receives notification from a publicly owned treatment plant.)

IDEM will develop a standard template that all Media and Communication Services Public Information Officers can complete with the pertinent information and fax to the appropriate news media by county in addition to media markets.

Currently under development are specific internal procedures to ensure coordination amongst the Office of Water Management, the Office of Land Quality, and the Media and Communication Services Office for incidents involving reporting by publicly owned treatment facilities, pursuant to IC 13-18-12-8.

2) Agency Plan for Communicating High Impact Priority I Incidents

In addition to dispatching the ER Media Representative to the incident, the following steps will be utilized to determine the best plan for communicating with the public for all High Impact Priority I Incidents:

1) Assessment of the best approach for communicating with the public

The following managers, as available, will be included in discussions to determine a recommendation for the Commissioner on communicating with the public:

- \$ Impacted Office Assistant Commissioner(s)
- \$ Public Policy Assistant Commissioner
- \$ Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Results
- \$ Emergency Response Manager Overseeing the Incident
- \$ Compliance and Response Branch Chief
- \$ Media and Communication Services Director
- \$ Emergency Response Media Representative



Agency Procedures for Communicating with the Public - continued

2) Agency Plan for Communicating High Impact Priority I Incidents - continued

1) Recommendation to the Commissioner

The recommendation will include the following:

- \$ Whether additional agencies (local, state, and federal) need to be notified
- \$ Communication coordination procedures if multiple state agencies (and multiple state public information officers) are involved
- \$ Determination on the need to establish a Joint Information Center to ensure state agencies are releasing coordinated and accurate information
- \$ Whether a press release(s) should be issued, including consideration of the following:

When to release information

- \$ At the beginning: *AWe have received a report that an unknown substance has been released to the water in the vicinity of . . . .@*
- \$ After confirming some facts: *AWe have confirmed . . . .@*
- \$ When we have all the information: *AAfter a thorough assessment . . . .@*

To whom and how to release information

- \$ Should notification be given to locally impacted residents and/or the general public?
- \$ Should we use the media to notify the public?
- \$ Should a press release be prepared?
- \$ Should a press conference be held?
- \$ Should we place the information on the web page?
- \$ Is door to door notification plausible?
- \$ Could a mass mailing be sent?
- \$ Any other options?

Who Releases the Information

- \$ One spokesperson or more (should one state agency take the lead for all state information)
- \$ Should the responder on-site answer media inquiries
- \$ Should local entities release information

3) Follow up Internal Communication Plan

An Internal Communication Plan will also be activated to ensure managers and media specialists are continually updated on the response. Components of this plan may include:

- \$ Updated email information
- \$ Schedule for briefing meetings and/or conference calls
- \$ Written response activity plans